

1 May 1986
MBK-6006

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT: Monthly Report -- Bangkok Bureau -- April 1986

I. GENERAL

A. Security around the Embassy, Ambassador's residence, housing compounds, and the International School was noticeably enhanced following the U.S. air raids on Libya on the 15th. There was a rash of bomb scares on the 18th against a number of embassies and businesses. The International School, attended by most Embassy officers' children, also received a bomb threat, although the Embassy and Embassy offices around town were spared such threats. A bomb, however, was thrown at the Consulate in Songkla in the middle of the night on the 22nd. Some slight damage was done, but no one was hurt.

On the 20th, the Bangkok paper MATICHON published an article with a crude map of the Embassy area citing what it felt were weak spots in the Embassy's security that could be exploited by would-be terrorists. The article cited FBIS by our initials and gave the office location along with the paper's assessment of security at the building.

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B. Earlier in the month, on the 8th, a bomb exploded in front of the Erawan Hotel an hour before the Thai Government was to host a dinner for visiting U.S. Defense Secretary Weinberger. Most Thai authorities, according to media reports, seem to think the bomb blast was directed more toward embarrassing the Thai prime minister politically than toward assassinating the American official.

C. The announcement of lower rice prices in consequence of the U.S. Farm Act caused a big stir in the Thai media and among government officials. Fears were expressed that Thailand would lose significant markets which would cause havoc for Thai farmers and for the balance of payments. The Thai foreign minister went so far as to state that bilateral relations might be affected.

D. The most serious challenge to the Thai Government since last September's coup was being mounted at month's end by a number of dissident MPs. Several controversial banking decrees sponsored by the government will soon be taken up by parliament, and MPs unhappy over a variety of things are using the opportunity to make their move. If the government loses many predict the prime minister will either have to resign or call new elections.

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II. OPERATIONS

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A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. The U.S. air raid on Libya generated a fair amount of high precedence local reaction and even higher amounts of interest in the Embassy. Editors made numerous calls to the Ambassador, DCM, and the Political Section over a several-day period apprising them of latest developments as reported by AFP and other media. Embassy officials were quite appreciative of the service. On the 16th, [] called the Bureau to report that the opening session of the Nonaligned Ministerial Conference was being carried live from Delhi via satellite. He recorded the Indian Prime Minister's speech in which Gandhi stated India's strong criticism of the U.S. raid. The speech was not carried via radio and ROSET provided our only version of this significant speech. A driver was sent to Bang Ping to pick up the videotape and bring it to the Bureau for priority processing.

2. Special radio and television coverage of Thai reaction to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's announcement of new rice prices was instituted on the 12th. There was extreme interest at the Embassy and strong consumer interest passed on by the Wire in the planned television reaction expected from the director general of the Thai Foreign Ministry's Economic Affairs Department. The Thai official's comments were given priority processing by the Bureau along with other Thai comment. A VSL was prepared and the videotape mailed to MOD. Because of the high interest in the subject, the Bureau had earlier arranged to provide the Embassy's Agricultural Attache with his own copies of all processed items on Thai agriculture.

3. Several adjustments were made with Headquarters approval in Cambodian coverage following the resignation last month of one of the unit's monitors. No coverage has been dropped, but several lesser programs are being processed on a time available basis. To their credit the unit has kept up admirably with all commitments even though it is only at 75 percent strength at the moment.

4. The Pakistani media were virtually silent for several days on the subject of the return to the country of Benazir Bhutto which took place on the 10th. The Bureau had to rely on AFP, Indian media, and the BBC, from which some of our best items came, to report on the tumultuous welcome she received.

5. To assist Okinawa Bureau while their Vietnam Unit was down to one monitor, the Bureau agreed to pick up processing with part three of a six part serialized speech by CPV Politburo Member and Secretary Vo Chi Cong on economic policy. At AG request processing was done on a priority basis with the Bangkok contribution running to 12 takes.

6. On the 30th, the Bureau remained open past COB to cover the Indian security forces' takeover of the Sikh Golden Temple in Amritsar. The last time this happened there was large loss of life and Indira Gandhi was ultimately assassinated in a reprisal.

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B. Communications

Several attempts to activate the communications altroute during the month were unsuccessful. Previously the Bureau's altroute bypassed the switch at Clark AFB in the Philippines. For reasons we are not aware of, however, our first altroute has been routed through Clark for some months now. Thus when our primary circuit goes out (not an unusual occurrence) our altroute is also inoperative and the Bureau must resort to telex.

C. Lateral Services

1. One item was processed at BBC request.

2. The Cambodian Unit provided a summary of a KPNLF press release obtained by the Embassy's Political Section. The Embassy expressed appreciation for the Bureau's assistance.

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D. Technical

1. On the 23d, the elevation drive motor on the ROSET operations dish refused to function. Bureau Assistant Engineer [] and the Bang Ping crew succeeded in getting a brake that had apparently become stuck to release and since that time the dish has operated properly.

2. There continues to be loss of data in some ROSET cruising equipment as a result of power fluctuations/outages. So far it has mainly been a nuisance since no additional equipment has been damaged since the more serious outage several months ago. Data losses occur on an average of several times a week.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

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1. Technician trainee [] resigned on the 11th to take another position.

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2. [] entered on duty on the 7th as a contract administrative clerk.

3. Recruiting to fill a teletype opening that will be coming up soon commenced during the month. Some 42 applications have been received and 5 individuals interviewed thus far.

B. Visits

1. Newly arrived DCM Joseph Winder on the 7th for Bureau tour and familiarization.

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2. Former Bureau editor [redacted] on the 8th on private travel during PCS to Hong Kong Bureau. STAT

3. Okinawa editor [redacted] on 1 day TDY for Bureau familiarization during personal travel in Bangkok. STAT

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[redacted]
Acting Chief,
Bangkok Bureau

CLA:cla

Attachment: Production Report

BANGKOK BUREAU PRODUCTION REPORT FOR APRIL 1986

I. TOTALS FROM ALL SOURCES:

TOTAL PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	728,940
TOTAL NON-PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	342,520
TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLISHABLE ITEMS FILED DURING MONTH:	1,571

	<u>BROAD- CASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLI- CATION</u>
II. <u>INPUT OF REGULAR COVERAGE:</u> (minutes or issues per week)	20,470 min.	20,420 min.	254.00 issues
III. <u>OUTPUT FROM ROSET SOURCES:</u> (publishable words per month)			

INDIA

Delhi Television Service in English	2,630		
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INDONESIA

Jakarta ANTARA in English		16,220	
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MALAYSIA

Kuala Lumpur BERNAMA in English		14,170	
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PHILIPPINES

Manila PNA in English		50,290	
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IV. OUTPUT FROM ALL OTHER SOURCES:
(publishable words per month)AUSTRALIA

Melbourne Overseas Service in English	22,410		
Sydney THE BULLETIN in English			2,680

BANGLADESH

Dhaka Domestic Service in English	2,470		
Dhaka BSS in English		420	

BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATION
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BURMA

Rangoon Domestic Service in Burmese	5,780	
Rangoon WORKING PEOPLE'S DAILY in English		290

CAMBODIA

Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian	35,690	
Phnom Penh SPK in English		16,990
Phnom Penh SPK in French		5,060

CHINA

Beijing International Service in Burmese	9,000	
Beijing International Service in Lao	220	
Beijing in Cambodian to Cambodia	6,890	
Beijing in Hindi to India	280	

CLANDESTINE

(Clandestine) Voice of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian	18,790	
(Clandestine) Voice of Malayan Democracy in Malay	1,580	
(Clandestine) Voice of The National Army Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian	20,640	
(Clandestine) Voice of The People of Malaysia in Malay	5,290	
(Clandestine) Voice of the Khmer in Cambodian	9,070	
(Clandestine) Voice of the People of Burma in Burmese	3,700	

HONG KONG

Hong Kong AFP in English		56,850
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INDIA

Delhi Domestic Service in English	57,080	
Delhi General Overseas Service in English	7,280	

BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATION
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INDIA (continued)

Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English	5,140	
Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English		720
Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English		620
Delhi PATRIOT in English		540
Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English		490

INDONESIA

Jakarta Domestic Service in Indonesian	10,100	
Jakarta International Service in English	1,430	
Jakarta BERITA BUANA in Indonesian		190
Jakarta JAKARTA POST in English		2,810
Jakarta KOMPAS in Indonesian		720
Jakarta SINAR HARAPAN in Indonesian		1,600

LAOS

Vientiane Domestic Service in Lao	23,060	
Vientiane KPL in English		15,330

MALAYSIA

Kuala Lumpur Domestic Service in English	2,090	
Kuala Lumpur Domestic Service in Malay	1,190	
Kuala Lumpur International Service in English	4,620	
Kuala Lumpur NEW STRAITS TIMES in English		680
Kuala Lumpur NEW SUNDAY TIMES in English		400

NEPAL

Katmandu THE RISING NEPAL in English		120
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BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATION
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PAKISTAN

Karachi Domestic Service in English	10,340	
Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu	16,440	
Karachi Overseas Service in Urdu	1,220	

SINGAPORE

Singapore Domestic Service in English	3,340	
Singapore THE STRAITS TIMES in English		2,820

SRI LANKA

Colombo Domestic Service in English	140	
Colombo International Service in English	10,410	
Colombo SUN in English		1,210

THAILAND

Bangkok Domestic Service in English	2,440	
Bangkok Domestic Service in Thai	11,660	
Bangkok Television Service in Thai	11,820	
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in English	2,060	
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in Thai	1,820	
Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English		33,570
Bangkok BANGKOK WORLD in English		13,050
Bangkok KHAO PHISSET in Thai		2,530
Bangkok MATICHON in Thai		8,560
Bangkok NAEO NA in Thai		5,990
Bangkok Prachachat Thurakit in Thai		790
Bangkok SIAM RAT SAPDA WICHAN in Thai		1,260
Bangkok SIAM RAT in Thai		2,550
Bangkok THAI RAT in Thai		1,750

BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATION
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THAILAND (continued)

Bangkok THE NATION in English		27,590
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UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Moscow in Bengali to Bangladesh	150	
Moscow in Cambodian to Cambodia	740	
Moscow in Hindi to India	1,090	
Moscow in Indonesian to Indonesia	320	
Moscow in Thai to Thailand	1,000	

UNITED KINGDOM

London BBC World Service in English	5,900	
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VIETNAM

Hanoi Domestic Service in Vietnamese	69,930	
Hanoi International Service in English	1,620	
Hanoi International Service in Thai	170	
Hanoi VNA in English		1,350
Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese		4,440
Hanoi QUAN DOI NHAN DAN in Vietnamese		10,740
Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese		14,510